

DISCUSSION OF THE AMENDMENTS

Claims 1-11 were previously cancelled.

Claims 12-15, 21 and 22 are currently amended.

Claims 16, 17, 19, 20 and 22-30 were previously presented.

Claims 18 and 31 are withdrawn.

Upon entry of the amendments, claim 12-31 will be pending.

The claims were amended to clarify claim language and to correct minor typographical errors. The amendments do not limit the scope of the claims.

No new matter has been added.

REMARKS

The Office has rejected claims 14, 22, 24, 27 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over the combination of Breulmann (U.S. Publication No. 2003/0105225) and Sallmetall (WO 96/09928). Applicants submit that the cited references would not have rendered the claimed subject matter unpatentable under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) because the combination of the cited references do not teach or suggest all the recitations of the claimed subject matter.

The disclosure relates to a mold containing a 1) composite layered sheet or composite layered film, 2) a backing layer made from plastic injection-molded, foamed, or cast onto the back of the material, where the composite layered sheet or composite layered film contains a substrate layer containing components A and B and optionally C and/or D, 3) optionally an intermediate layer and 4) an outer layer containing one or more hard copolymers that are obtainable by polymerization of vinylaromatic monomers and acrylonitrile where the vinylaromatic monomers used contain from 80 to 100% by weight of α -methylstyrene.

Breulmann describes a thermoplastic molding compound and a process for preparing graft copolymers. As the Office notes on page 4 of the Office Action, Breulmann does not teach or suggest the recited outer layer. Applicants note that Breulmann does not teach or suggest a composite layered sheet or composite layered film and a backing layer. The Office relies on Sallmetall to overcome the deficiencies of Breulmann.

Sallmetall describes a cover foil intended to be arranged adheringly to a surface. The foil consists of a laminate with a first layer which may contain polycarbonate, PMMA, PVC, ABS, PP, or PE, a second layer containing polycarbonate, PMMA, PVC, polyester/PET or ABS and a third layer containing EVA, EEA, EBA, EMA or GBA. The Office concludes that the outer layer in Sallmetall combined with the molding in Breulmann renders the claimed molding unpatentable under 35 U.S.C. §103(a).

Applicants note that the claimed molding contains an outer layer containing one or more hard polymers obtained by polymerization of vinylaromatic monomers and acrylonitrile where the vinylaromatic monomers contain 80 to 100% by weight of α -methylstyrene. The outer layer polymers in Sallmetall (EVA, EEA, EBA, EMA or GBA) are different than the recited polymers for the outer layer of the claimed molding. Therefore, the combination of Breulmann and Sallmetall do not teach or suggest all the recitations of the claimed molding. Accordingly, the claimed molding would not have been obvious over the combination of these references.

Based on the remarks above, Applicants respectfully request that the Office withdraw the rejection under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over the combination of Breulmann and Sallmetall.

Applicants request that should the Office find the examined subject matter allowable, that the Office expand the search to the other non-elected species in the claims.

In addition, should the Office find that the claims to the molding composition are allowable, that the Office rejoin claims 18 and 31 directed to a process for producing the moldings. (MPEP §821.04)

Finally, Applicants note that the specification has been amended such that the Abstract is one paragraph. Accordingly, the objection to the Abstract should be withdrawn.

In light of the above remarks, Applicants submit that the application is in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration is respectfully requested.

Applicant believes no fee is due with this response. However, if a fee is due, please charge our Deposit Account No. 03-2775, under Order No. 12810-00006-US from which the undersigned is authorized to draw.

Dated: June 26, 2007

Respectfully submitted,
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